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sion of our heart, and the soul bows in reverence before the awful forms of prophets and sibyls conceived by Michael Angelo.

A SOUL PORTRAIT.

I MAY not, dearest, trace thy *form*
By Art's divine control,
But love will lend me magic hues,
And I will paint thy soul:
My woman's heart the canvas be,
My tinted palette—Memory.

Nor fear I careless eyes and cold
The sacred task will scan;
Since first—life's sole remembered date—
My love for thee began,
I only knew thy truer guise,
Thou art not thus to other eyes.

There are who deem thee insincere,
So varying thy mood;
Thus blends the diadem of Heaven,
One bright arch seven hued;
And who would gaze, but gazing, bless—
Nor wish one glowing tint the less.

Not she who found thine every mood
Or stern, or grave, or gay,
Each look, a more than magic spell
To wile her heart away;
Each smile a joy, each toil a care,
That she who loved thee longed to share.

The sea-waves dash against the rock,
The rock throws back the spray,
Till conquered by their tireless might
The granite wears away;
So to thy soul's rebounding strength
Life's sternest barriers yield at length.

And I—whose heart a crimson glow
Sends herald to my cheek,
When envious tongues in careless tone
Thy treasured name may speak—
But call to mind thy dauntless will,
And bid each throbbing pulse "Be still."

Unwavering eye! unflinching feet!
Thine onward course is clear;
"True to thyself, so true to all;"
Brave—not devoid of fear;
And those who know thee best may see
How plain the apparent mystery.

True image! save 'tis feebly traced;
A sacred task is mine,
To wreath afresh Love's choicest flowers
In beauty round thy shrine,
The altar fires to guard alight,
And keep the altar torches bright.

LOUISA FLAGG.

FLORAL GAMES.

THE poetical contests, called Floral Games or *Jeux Floraux*, of Toulouse, were established in the early part of the 14th century, and revived toward the close of the 15th century, by Clemence Isaure, a poetical Frenchwoman, who was called the Sappho of Toulouse, and who, by her will, appropriated her fortune for their maintenance. Her statue, crowned with flowers, adorned the festival of the floral games, and her eulogy was annually pronounced at them. The festivals were inaugurated for a time by visiting her tomb and strewing it with flowers, and after by celebrating mass in the beautiful church *de la Daurade*, where the gold and silver flowers destined to the victors are still annually blessed. In 1695, the academy of Floral Games received a charter by Louis XIV., and fully organized under the direction of one chancellor, thirty-five *mainteneurs*, and twenty masters. The office of chancellor was afterward abolished, and the seal transferred to a perpetual secretary, but with few other modifications the academy still continues, having been only temporarily interrupted during the revolutionary period (1790-1806).

Its festivals are annual on May 3, when the ancient title of Troubadour is still claimed, and the ancient forms of Provençal poetry are still followed with reverence. The secretary is always a doctor of laws, and the rules observed are denominated the laws of love. They were drawn up in verse in 1356, by one of the original members. Six prizes are now granted; an amaranth of gold for the ode, a violet of silver for epistles or discourses in verse, a marigold of silver for the eclogue, idyl, elegy, or ballad, a primrose of silver for the apologue, a lily of silver for a hymn to the Virgin, and an eglantine of gold for the poem on any subject proposed by the academy. Every one, without distinction of country or sex, may contend for the prizes.

It must be evident to every observer of human nature, that there are aspirations for the beautiful in poetry and Art, which ordinary pecuniary inducement or the temptations of fame are unable to rouse into action, but which institutions, such as that of Toulouse, may succeed in stimulating. The probability, moreover, is that poetical institutions of this kind will be more likely to flourish in America than in France. For in France, especially in southern France, poetry enters so deeply into daily life, that but little remains of it for investment in rhymes. The frenzy of the poet may be seen in many households in France, in the sparkling eyes, in the vehement gesture, in the dramatic character which pervades every movement and every thought of this mercurial people. The Toulousian troubadour of the 19th century differs but little from that of the 9th century. The objects of his devotion are changed, not the cast of his mind. Instead of consecrating his life to a magnanimous *châtelaine*, he devotes it to the *crédit mobilier*, and he raves now with the same poetical ecstacy of railway shares as he then did of a share in the affections of his innamorata. The romantic-feudal era has been super-